The Engraved Score in *Clarissa*:
An Intersection of Music, Narrative, and Graphic Design
As a component of eighteenth-century culture and daily life, music makes a modest appearance in all of Samuel Richardson’s epistolary novels. In *Pamela*, Richardson’s heroine entertains company with her “Singing and Dancing” and spinet playing; in the sequel, Richardson devotes a lengthy letter to the sensational spectacle of opera; in *Clarissa*, he gives the heroine’s musical accomplishments prominent expression, even in the Will in which she bequeaths her “harpsichord...chamber organ, and...music books” to her cousin, Dolly Hervey; and, in *Sir Charles Grandison*, Richardson insists that his English heroine, Harriet Byron, can “play and sing” Mr. Handel’s “fine air” with “ease,” though she had “never but once before played it over.” In effect, Richardson consistently portrays musical education as an essential part of a young woman’s aesthetic, spiritual, and
cultural development. All of his heroines are schooled (though to differing degrees) in musical appreciation, reading, and performance. Music in Richardson’s novels is a traditional index of a woman’s class and upbringing. It is no surprise, therefore, that Richardson—who assumes a certain level of musical literacy across his readership—occasionally relies on metaphors and terminology borrowed from the discourse of music. What is surprising is that on one occasion Richardson “borrows” the music itself, inserting it as an engraved folding plate into the editions of *Clarissa* over which he had control as printer-author (______). With the insertion of this engraved score into *Clarissa*—a graphic design that involved significant planning and expense—Richardson fuses the printed code of a piece of music with his own verbal text, calling particular attention to the performative aspects of his fiction, the bookmaking process, and the significant role music plays in the world of the novel.

The engraved score has virtually disappeared from modern editions of *Clarissa*, which significantly transform, delete, or reposition this page of text. Modern critical consideration of *Clarissa* has, probably as a result of this silent textual excision, also ignored this musical page in the novel. But Richardson’s engraved score constitutes, I will argue, an important experiment in the interpretive impact of graphic design on the eighteenth-century novel. Using his visual acumen as Master Printer, Richardson here places a scene’s verbal text within a unique visual context in order to augment a particular interpretation of his fiction. Indeed, in its unusual combination of image and text, Richardson’s musical page resembles, or anticipates, the work of Laurence Sterne.
violates a novel-reader’s expectations by self-consciously incorporating a familiar cultural artifact into the novel. And like Sterne’s unconventional marbled page, Richardson’s musical page calls attention to itself because it is visually and generically inconsistent with the rest of the novel’s format; in Richardson’s own words, “it was not expected.” The engraved musical score is, of course, also unique precisely because it is music. The musical notes constitute a visual code for an auditory performance, bestowing upon this single sheet a hermeneutic three-dimensionality that the rest of Richardson’s pages do not possess. Here Richardson overlaps three kinds of texts: the visual text, or graphic design, of the oversized engraving; the verbal text of the fiction and the accompanying poem; and the auditory text of the musical score.

How are we to interpret this unique three-dimensional moment in Clarissa? And how did Richardson expect his contemporary readership to ‘read’ this sheet of music as part of the novel’s text? I will explore this strangely synesthetic moment in the novel by reconstructing parts of the visual, verbal, and musical aspects of this page in the material context of eighteenth-century print culture. This cultural context is, I will demonstrate, crucial to an understanding of the interpretive function of this singular ‘illustration.’ For like the marbled page in Tristram Shandy, Richardson’s musical page alludes to the materiality of bookmaking. Just as Sterne’s first readers would have recognized the marbled page as a misplaced feature of contemporary book production (the endpapers of a book inserted into the middle of the text), so Richardson’s reader recognizes the borrowed features of a variety of printed music in
his unconventional engraving. Building upon these visual clues, Richardson uses the musical page to highlight Clarissa’s attempts to define a feminine politics and to implicate the reader of the novel in that project.

The full narrative context is important to the appearance of the score as part of the novel’s literary text. In Richardson’s own editions, the musical engraving appears when Clarissa, dreading her sacrifice to the despicable Roger Solmes on the altar of her family’s ambition, retreats to her room to “compose [her] angry passions at [her] harpsichord” (2:50). In this scene she plays an original composition in which she sets to music a poem “not unsuitable to my unhappy situation” (2:50). In the final paragraphs of a letter to Anna Howe, enclosing her music, Clarissa explains what prompted this musical exercise:
Eleven o’Clock at Night.

I have been forced to try to compose my angry passions at my Harpsichord; having first shut close my doors and windows, that I might not be [End Page 2] heard below. As I was closing the shutters of the windows, the distant whooting of the Bird of Minerva, as from the often-visited Woodhouse, gave the subject in that charming Ode to Wisdom, which does honour to our Sex, as it was written by one of it. I made an essay, a week ago, to set the three last Stanza’s of it, as not unsuitable to my unhappy situation; and after I had re-perused the Ode, those were my Lesson: And, I am sure, in the solemn address they contain to the All-wise and All-powerful Deity, my heart went with my fingers.

I inclose the Ode, and my effort with it. The subject is solemn: My circumstances are affecting; and I flatter myself, that I have not been quite unhappy in the performance. If it obtain your approbation, I shall be out of doubt: And should be still more assured, could I hear it tried by your voice and finger.

(2:50)

Clarissa then transcribes for Anna all but the last three stanzas of the poem “The Ode to Wisdom,” which Richardson identifies as having been written by “A Lady.” In the first three editions of the published novel, this transcription is followed by the large folding leaf containing the remaining stanzas of the Ode’s verbal text and Clarissa’s musical setting.
If, as Angus Ross writes, Richardson “commissioned the music and had it engraved at considerable cost,” he must have considered it an essential part of his literary text. Richardson printed four editions of *Clarissa* on his own press (in 1748, 1749, 1751, and 1759). In each of these four original editions he inserts the engraved music into this scene of the novel, almost as if the musical score were an attendant illustration. This striking nonpictorial ‘illustration’ is highly unusual, even for the visually experimental printer-author Richardson. The elaborate sixth edition of *Pamela* (1742), for example, with its twenty-nine engraved plates of rococo designs by Hayman and Gravelot, offers nothing like this musical engraving. And although Richardson describes, in each of his novels, the musical “accomplishments” of his characters, nowhere else does he provide his readers with an actual score—a physical record of this creativity. This page is particularly unusual in its estimated production cost. Richardson had lost a great deal of money on the lavishly illustrated sixth edition of *Pamela*. As a result, after 1742 Richardson abandoned the conventional illustrated book for a more economically prudent means of literary production. Indeed, Richardson’s bibliographer, William Merritt Sale Jr., documents the laborious efforts to reduce cost by minimizing the waste of paper (paper being the most expensive aspect of book production at this time) during the printing of *Clarissa*. Given this drive to economize, the oversized musical engraving, the reverse of which is left wholly blank, seems decidedly lavish—a bookmaking decision that sacrifices economic criteria to artistic ones.
Unfortunately, previous critical consideration of this moment in the novel dwells, not on the artistic function of the musical score, but on the embarrassing story of Richardson’s appropriation of “The Ode to Wisdom,” a poem by the celebrated Bluestocking, Elizabeth Carter. Richardson, it appears, lifted the ode from a circulating manuscript copy without Carter’s knowledge or permission. Upon discovering her poem transposed into the pages of Richardson’s new novel, Carter complained of “a proceeding so very ungnerous and unworthy of a man of reputation.” Richardson replied that he did not mean to offend “a lady...the intention of my work being to do honour to the sex, to the best of my poor abilities.” Richardson’s “faithful relation of the occasion of the trespass” appeased the irate Carter, with whom he eventually became friends. But more than offering an uncharacteristically vulnerable image of its author, Richardson’s letters to Carter evidence, above all, his obsessive involvement with the minutiae of his work’s visual design. In one of the letters, he justifies his plagiarism by reference to the unique way in which he has inserted Carter’s ode into his novel:
I presumed not to make my character, though the principal one, claim it, only doing intentional honour to it, by setting it to music, which is done in a masterly manner. I caused it to be engraved and wrought singly, the more to distinguish it. And all this trouble I might have spared, and the expense with it, as, though the Ode would have been an ornament to any work, and an honour to any character, it was not expected.

Upon the whole, give me leave to say that I was not, in this re-acknowledged trespass, governed by any low or selfish views. 16

Richardson’s primary aim in this letter is, of course, to absolve himself of unethical behavior. Thus Richardson claims that the act of doing “intentional honour to [the ode], by setting it to music” came at considerable personal “expense.” And while the addition of the musical engraving must indeed have been troublesome and costly, it is not merely—as Richardson claims—a magnanimous “honour” to Carter’s appropriated ode, but part of a visual strategy furthering Richardson’s own interpretive intentions in Clarissa.

In his fiction, Richardson reiterates the claim that the musical setting honors Carter’s poem; Clarissa insists that her music highlights the ode’s denouement, or what she terms “my Lesson.” And the musical page does indeed “distinguish” the ode’s last three stanzas by rendering them in italic script as part of the engraved musical score. While it would have been far more conventional to provide a reader with the music at the beginning
of the ode—thereby setting all its uniform stanzas to music—Richardson chooses to engrave the last rather than the first few stanzas with musical accompaniment. In this manner, his “ornamentation” of the ode has built a visible as well as audible crescendo, emphasizing those passages Clarissa says she deems the most important moral “lesson” of the poem. Yet the engraved score does not simply emphasize the moral philosophy of Carter’s ode or even the poetic lyricism of the ode-turned-lyric; rather, the music’s presence in the novel underscores the performative qualities of the book of which the musical page is a part. Even if a reader of the novel does not pause to actually play or sing Clarissa’s composition, the elaborate presentation of this scene in the novel as a piece of [End Page 5] sheet music signals the dramatic possibilities inherent in the new genre. The musical page argues that, like an actual score, the novel may be (literally or figuratively) performed, read aloud, or—in this instance—even sung. Richardson’s musical page reminds the reader that, although the new species of writing stimulates private reading and fosters an increasingly sequestered, even passive, audience, it nonetheless remains the kind of text that can be communally shared and enacted. The musical score thus calls attention to the act of reading itself.

As a page of text that highlights the phenomenology of reading, the score also functions as a self-conscious interruption of the reading process. In the first three editions of Clarissa, the leaf of the musical score unfolds to more than twice the size of any other page in the novel. Thus, the music sheet disrupts established textual boundaries, physically extending the textual space of the novel outward past the established margins of the
text. It is precisely the unexpected oversized format of the ode’s graphic presentation that directs the reader’s gaze to this moment in the novel. Like the protruding feather of Clarissa’s concealed pen—which reveals to those searching her rooms “such of my hidden Stores [of writing implements] as,” Clarissa predicts, “I intend they shall find”—the musical setting’s protruding page flags this moment in the novel for Richardson’s own audience (2:307). By “distinguish[ing]” the ode with the engraved musical accompaniment, Richardson has emphasized a moment in his own text as distinct and important. Ironically, by “honour[ing]” Carter’s ode with a musical setting, Richardson relegates it to the status of an ornamentation in his own work—a textual moment whose visual properties now dominate its verbal content. As Richardson proudly admits to Carter, such an “ornament” in his novel was “not expected.”

Richardson did not, of course, invent the folding illustration. Oversized, folding pictorial engravings and diagrams are not uncommon in eighteenth-century publications, particularly illustrated periodicals and reference books. Some contemporary prose fictions, histories, and travel books also sport folding maps, illustrations conventionally placed at the front of a work or volume. In fiction and nonfiction alike, these folding pages supplement the verbal text with either an attendant illustration or—in the case of maps—a point of reference. The fact that eighteenth-century readers were familiar with folding engravings in other types of books does not diminish the element of surprise I attribute to this page in *Clarissa*. What makes the appearance of the score in *Clarissa* noteworthy is not its violation of print convention but its self-conscious adaptation of existing printing
techniques. In this page, Richardson creates an eclectic combination of oversized format, *in medias res* insertion, nonpictorial illustration, and musical content in an otherwise uniform piece of prose fiction. And, unlike the familiar folding map or pictorial illustration, the function of the musical score as part of the novel’s text is not immediately apparent. The folding musical page in *Clarissa* thus asserts itself as a textual curiosity—a singular page that, despite its mimetic ambitions, aligns the novel not with the private epistle but with the protean vitality of contemporary print culture.

In calling attention to the book as a physical artifact, the design of the musical page links it with specific types of books in mid-eighteenth-century print culture for interpretive effect. Specifically, when Clarissa glosses her musical “essay” as a “Lesson,” the visual rendering of her music in an engraved format invokes a contemporary reader’s familiarity with the pedagogical genre of the musical “lesson book.” A wide variety of so-called “suites of lessons” for the harpsichord were available to a mid-eighteenth-century consumer. These collections of (often engraved) musical exercises bear titles such as: *Six suites of easy lessons for the harpsichord or spinet...*; *...[T]he most celebrated lessons collected and fitted to the harpsichord...*; *A collection of lessons for the harpsichord; Six sonatas or lessons for the harpsichord...*; and *Shorts airs and lessons for the harpsichord...* by several hands. This verbal-visual allusion to the musical lesson book helps Richardson underscore the didactic function he assigns musical education. By explicitly locating in Clarissa’s musical exercise a moral “lesson,” while simultaneously rendering this moral in a published format
reminiscent of musical textbooks and pedagogical miscellanies, Richardson equates musical instruction with instruction in moral conduct. In the engraved plate of music, Clarissa’s moral “essay” and her musical composition become indistinguishable “lessons.”

Plate 2.
From A Collection of the Choicest Songs and Dialogues (London, 1704?). Department of Special Collections, The University of Chicago Libraries.
Plate 3.
From *A Collection of the Choicest Songs and Dialogues* (London, 1704?). Department of Special Collections, The University of Chicago Libraries.
In addition to evoking the pedagogical lesson book, the engraved format of the musical score visually aligns Clarissa’s composition with genteel songs in the Vauxhall tradition, reinforcing a particular characterization of the heroine. Clarissa’s musical composition is, like her letters, an act of self-authorship. Literally born out of an attempt to compose herself—“I have been forced to try to compose my angry passions at my Harpsichord”—Clarissa’s musical exercise yields a form of textual self-expression that supplements her epistolary autobiography.

Richardson is careful to present this self-authoring in the most favorable light. Hiding his didactic visual strategy behind the convenient conceit of mimetic transcription, Richardson uses the social class that the professionally engraved score of Clarissa’s music evokes to augment his heroine’s respectability and noble character. Vauxhall songs and fashionable ballads would often—like Clarissa’s score—be engraved “singly” and sold in “loose half sheet” format for “a penny a-page” (________ & _).

Thus a contemporary reader’s prior familiarity with music in this popular format explains the singularity of the musical score in the novel. In the fiction, as in the real world, the reader
encounters genteel songs “singly,” engraved upon individual sheets. The quality of Richardson’s engraving nearly approaches that of what is arguably the most elaborately embellished collection of fashionable music in the century: George Bickham’s *Musical Entertainer* (1740), a lavishly illustrated folio reminiscent of a modern coffee-table book (______).

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**Plate 5.**

From *An Antidote Against Melancholy. Being a Collection of Fourscore Merry Songs, Wherein those of the same subject and key are placed in agreeable succession in Relation to the Different Measures of Time, After the Manner of suits of lessons* (London: Printed for Daniel Brown, 1749), pp. 32–33. Department of Special Collections, The University of Chicago Libraries.
Conversely, Richardson’s large, engraved page—precisely because it is engraved—would never be mistaken for a selection from the letter-press music found in the less expensive duodecimo collections of popular songs or contemporary periodicals (___ & __). 22 Already dissimilar in appearance, these letter-press collections of “merry” tunes also do not resemble Clarissa’s composition in musical style or subject matter; instead, [End Page 9] they are filled with robust music of the type favored by Squire Western in Tom Jones. 23 Similarly, Clarissa’s music visually disassociates itself even from the middle-class genre of pastoral song books, collections of popular
lyrics with titles such as “The Hive,” “The Robin,” “The Linnet,” and “The Thrush.” Such pastoral collections of “the most celebrated songs” lack musical scores like Clarissa’s, for these offer only the verbal text of lyrics meant to be sung to well-known tunes. Situated within this visual spectrum of contemporary music, the graphic design of Clarissa’s musical score thus distinguishes it from provincial or popular music, reinforcing instead her genteel and ambitious self-presentation.

Musically, Clarissa’s song also augments this noble characterization of the heroine, evoking an educated, almost aristocratic milieu. The piece’s deliberate marchlike opening; the stately Andante tempo; the complexity of the harmonies; the movements in quarter notes; the dotted rhythms; the aspiring ascent of the vocal line (in measures two and four); the professional ‘short-hand’ of the independently melodic bass line meant to be expanded into two hands by the harpsichordist; even the value-laden, ‘grand’ key of E major—all these aspects of Clarissa’s music mark its professionally majestic style. Richardson appears to want to impress his readers with Clarissa’s musical talents in addition to her other accomplishments. Yet the capacity of these lofty musical features to reinforce Clarissa’s learning relies, of course, on the ability of Richardson’s own audience to read the musical score and recognize its participation in a school of bourgeois musical discourse. In this sense, the musical score functions as a device for differentiating between readers. The education of exactly that group of ‘accomplished’ young women which has always remained part of the undisputed Clarissa audience—despite arguments about who else read Richardson—would have
included at least rudimentary training in the reading, singing, and playing of music. Richardson’s readership thus overlaps precisely with the group of eighteenth-century women who, trained in music, would be able to read the score as part of the novel’s ‘text.’

In the larger narrative context of the world of the novel, the music—in addition to displaying the heroine’s scholarship—also asserts Clarissa’s participation in a particular community, one defined primarily by gender. The discourse of music is, in fact, decidedly gendered throughout the novel and exchanged as a sign of fellowship between close female friends. To engage the discourse of music in the world of this novel is to participate in a community of like-minded women. The Bluestocking philosophy of Carter’s “Ode to Wisdom,” the poem that both inspires and becomes Clarissa’s song, hails a maiden community reinforced through the arts. The ode is addressed to Pallas Athena who, while acknowledged in [End Page 10] the ode as a war-goddess, is primarily invoked here as a patron of the arts, one who “inspires” the “poet’s song” (2:54). Athena, autonomous from birth, is invoked as a stock icon of the type of independent “intellectual life” and “retirement’s” maiden community to which Clarissa pledges allegiance throughout the novel (2:54). The ode, writes Clarissa, “does honour to our Sex.” Thus Clarissa’s request that her music be tried by Anna’s “voice and finger” reinforces not only their harmonious friendship and intellectual affinity, but also their mutual attraction to what Clarissa elsewhere terms “the Single Life.”
This female community, however, demands qualities of soul, rather than specific behaviors, musical skill, or gender narrowly defined. Not all women in the novel may participate in this maiden community, even when they engage in the discourse of music. Music is an outward expression of an affinity of mind and spirit. When women who lack these qualities affect musical behavior, they are rejected from the community as impostors. For example, only a few pages prior to this scene, Bella nonchalantly strikes the keys of Clarissa’s harpsichord. Bella’s assumption of the air of female friendship that this musical gesture would ordinarily denote is met with indignation by Clarissa: “And how do you think Bella employed herself while I was writing?—Why playing gently upon my harpsichord: and humming to it, to show her unconcernedness” (1:299). Clarissa’s indignation at Bella’s musical intrusion stems from her assessment of her sister as spiritually and emotionally androgynous:

O my dear! what a hard-hearted sex is the other!...Yet my Sister, too, is as hard-hearted as any of them. But this may be no exception neither: For she has been thought to be masculine in her air, and in her spirit. She has then perhaps, the soul of the other Sex in a body of ours.

(2:201)

While Bella engages in an outward sign of female friendship—the playing of music—she does not possess the spiritual disposition required for membership in this maiden community. When Bella nonchalantly engages in the discourse of music she betrays, instead, her incapacity for genuine female friendship.
The idea of a maiden community invoked through music persists throughout the novel. When we finally see Anna at her harpsichord it is during a visit from Mr. Hickman. Anna plays and sings not to impress her gentleman caller—as does Harriet Byron in *Grandison*—but to assert her independence. “I am so much accustomed,” writes Anna,

...to Hickman’s whining, creeping, submissive courtship, that I now expect nothing but whine and cringe from him; and am so little moved with his nonsense, that I am frequently forced to go to my harpsichord, to keep me awake, and to silence his humdrum.

(3:170–71) 31

Anna’s defiant, even cruel, playing manifests her allegiance to the all-female community called forth by Clarissa’s earlier song, a “Still, Domestic [End Page 11] Life” segregated from marriage and men (2:54). At the novel’s close, Richardson again resituates Clarissa within this maiden, musical context when Anna recalls Clarissa’s daily “diversions” amidst “her intimates”: “four or five friends of like years and inclinations” who would often “engage her to read, to talk, to touch the keys, or to sing, when any new book, or new piece of music, came down” (8:211–12). Within such small, domestic gatherings of like-minded women (for so I read the terms “intimates” and “friends” above), musical performance augments established female friendships and reinforces communal intellectual pursuits. Upon Clarissa’s death, her leadership role in this small colony of female artists and intellectuals is symbolically transferred to Dolly Hervey—the recipient of her harpsichord, chamber organ, and music books.
If by playing music a woman aligns herself with “the Single Life” and an all-female community, then by abandoning her music she disavows her female friendships and associations. When Lovelace expresses his disdain for female “friendship” as “a mere word...to make one another glow in the frosty weather of a Single State,” he, too, refers to music as the emblem of such female solidarity. He asserts that “when a man comes in between the pretended inseperables [such friendship] is given up, like their Music, and other maidenly amusements” (5:254). In the Collection of Sentiments, the indexing appendage to the third edition of Clarissa (1751), Richardson glosses Lovelace’s remark as a caution that “Music, and other maidenly amusements, are too generally given up by women, when married” (8:320). Richardson, it seems, advocates the maintenance of a female community—sustained, in part, by music—even in marriage.

Precisely because Richardson presents Clarissa’s music as a gesture of female friendship and solidarity, it might be assumed that Lovelace threatens to silence—through marriage or violence—what he himself describes as “her musical voice” (4:51). However, Lovelace poses a threat to music in the novel, not because he stifles song, but precisely because he endorses and promotes its performance. Lovelace is, first of all, not devoid of musical accomplishments, but a rather skilled musician:
...the dancing, the singing, the musical Ladies were all fond of my company: For who [I am in a humour to be vain, I think!—for who] danced, who sung, who touched the string, whatever the instrument, with a better grace than thy friend?

Lovelace boasts to Belford of his musical virtuosity as if this confirmed his sexual prowess with the “musical Ladies.” And, indeed, music for Lovelace (in the tradition of Watteau and Hogarth) is always in the service of seduction. [End Page 13] Lovelace’s appearances at the musical theatre, for example, are a fundamental part of his reputation as a rake: “he used to be often...at the Opera, with women; and every time with a different one” (2:154). Similarly, when Anna fears for a “sweet pretty girl...But just turned of Seventeen!” whom Lovelace has dubbed “his Rosebud,” she incriminates him with an anecdote that equates sexual overtures with musical performance: “He puts her upon singing. He praises her wild note.—O my dear, the girl’s undone!—Must be undone!—The man, you know, is Lovelace” (2:154–55). Lady Bradshaigh, who responds to this scene in her copy of Clarissa with the marginal annotation “No great harm or imodesty in singing,” might be deemed representative of a readership whom Richardson aimed to instruct in music’s social and symbolic significance. 35 Lovelace’s plot to capture and seduce Clarissa is also a plot to “put her upon singing.” Lovelace desires to make Clarissa his caged songbird—a wild creature slowly conditioned to sing for its “keeper”: 
...after a few days its struggles to escape still diminishing as it finds it to no purpose to attempt it, its new habitation becomes familiar; and it hops about from perch to perch, resumes its wonted cheerfulness, and every day sings a song to amuse itself, and reward its keeper.

(4:14)

In the third edition, Richardson adds to this passage, making Lovelace’s analogy between Clarissa and the caged songster painfully (and perhaps unnecessarily) explicit:

To let her fly now, what a pretty jest would that be!—— How do I know, except I try, whether she may not be brought to sing me a fine song, and to be as well contented as I have brought other birds to be, and very shy ones too?

(4:15) 36

Again and again, the threat Lovelace poses to Clarissa is enacted as a threat to her music; he aims to supplant the community of like-minded women which comprised Clarissa’s original musical company and to become her audience-of-one. Lovelace corrupts the intellectual and communal function behind music, yoking it to erotic power. His desire to master music in the novel—music which functions as the symbolic bond between educated women—recapitulates Lovelace’s violent attempts to isolate and direct Clarissa’s “harmonious voice” throughout the book (4:55).
By presenting Clarissa’s music as an actual sheet of engraved musical text, as opposed to a narrative account of her song, Richardson invites the musically literate reader to participate in Clarissa’s musical community and to thwart Lovelace’s desire to co-opt her music. Because it solicits reader participation, the score sustains a community in which music remains an expression of intellectual achievement, solidarity, and friendship. It invites the reader to act the part of Clarissa and try her music with “voice and finger.” For while Clarissa’s invitation to do so is directed at Anna, it is never explicitly accepted in the fiction. Anna acknowledges receipt of the musical setting in a postscript, remarking that Clarissa “has given new beauties to the charming Ode,” but never recounts having performed it (2:66). Clarissa’s invitation to join her in song—and perform an act of the utmost sympathy—thus seems deliberately open-ended. The absence of the music sheet in certain copies of the original editions might even suggest that some readers interpreted the musical engraving as an invitation to tear the music out of the novel and place it, as they would any similar sheet of music, upon their harpsichord stand for playing. In this manner the musical engraving encourages an extraordinary kind of reader response. It invites the reader to sing along with Clarissa.

It is tempting to assert that Richardson’s engraved invitation to his readers only fully extends to the musically proficient female readers of the novel. For, while the printed text of the letters cannot (as opposed to the handwritten originals, perhaps) encode the gender of the speaker or writer in their visual rendering, musical notation in this instance can. For a modern
reader the piece’s range (of one and one-quarter octave up to high A) is decidedly gender-specific: it is a soprano voice that leaps off of the page of the engraved score. In order for a male singer to perform Clarissa’s song, it would have to be transposed. By extension, the musical page might be interpreted to signal that only a female reader is granted direct access to the “maiden” community of friendship portrayed in the text of the song and in the novel as a whole. Admittedly, such a reading would have to acknowledge that the piece’s vocal range is indeed typical of genteel songs of the period; eighteenth-century tenors were expected to sing from the treble clef with (often unmarked) octave transposition. Nonetheless, it remains a possibility that Richardson, here too, self-consciously uses print convention (in this case that of musical notation) to further his interpretive ends and shape a community of readers.

While Clarissa’s music identifies the heroine as part of a community of educated young women, it also locates her as isolated from the larger social universe. Martha Bowden convincingly argues that music in this novel is ultimately private, not public, music (see n. 7). Clarissa plays her harpsichord in seclusion, and only after closing her “doors and windows” so that she “might not be heard below.” Unlike the enthusiastically applauded musical performances of Pamela and Harriet Byron before a company of family and friends, Clarissa’s song does not solidify her place in a larger social community. Clarissa’s solitary “performance,” in fact, signals her isolation from any society other than an idealized one open only to a select group of women.
By ignoring the engraved score in *Clarissa*, literary criticism has overlooked more than the role of music in the novel’s female politics. By failing [End Page 15] to acknowledge an interpretive purpose behind Richardson’s decision to set Carter’s ode to music, critics have neglected Richardson’s printerly instincts to encode meaning in the material production of his fiction. Although we faithfully reproduce and debate the playful physical features of *Tristram Shandy*, written only a decade later, we have ignored printer-author Richardson’s application of image and text. Perhaps Richardson’s *Clarissa* does not (at least at first) project the same kind of preoccupation with graphic design and textuality that Sterne’s work does. Yet the graphic design of this single page of text in *Clarissa* offers the reader a vital clue to interpreting the novel. Like Sterne’s textual anomalies, Richardson’s specially designed page of music is a highly self-conscious feature of his book. Richardson’s documented involvement with the minutest details of his fiction’s visual production should likewise instruct us to respect the printing techniques deployed in his books as an integral part of the literary ‘text.’ Within the material context of eighteenth-century print culture Richardson’s neglected musical score, in particular, asserts itself as an important page in *Clarissa*, a page deserving of reproduction, reconsideration, and—for a select group of readers—even performance.

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Footnotes


2. *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded. In a Series of Familiar Letters From a Beautiful Young Damsel to her Parents: and Afterwards in Her Exalted Condition...The Third and Fourth Volumes...By the Editor of the Two First* (London: Printed for S. Richardson, 1742), 4:109–14.

3. *Clarissa. Or, the History of a Young Lady: Comprehending the most Important Concerns of Private Life*, 3rd edn., 8 vols. (London: Printed for S. Richardson, 1751), 8:102. Subsequent refs. are to this edn. and will be cited parenthetically by vol. and page number. A facsimile reprint by AMS Press (N.Y., 1990) as part of its ongoing Clarissa Project has recently made this rare 3rd edn. widely available to scholars.


6. For example, John Butt's 4-vol. Everyman edn. (1932) shrinks the music and the lyrics of (only) stanza XIV onto a single, conventionally sized page of unadorned text (1:277). The 1943 Shakespeare Head Press edn. of *Clarissa* does include a rendition of the music in sheet-form, tipped into (as opposed to bound within Richardson's original) the text of the novel. However, in addition to differing in size and visual appearance, the music sheet in this book does not fold outward as in Richardson's first three edns. In the Penguin edn. of *Clarissa*, edited by Angus Ross, the music is removed from the central text and reproduced in an appendix on the last page of a reprinting that otherwise honors the 1st edn. as its copy-text. Only the Clarissa Project's facsimile of the 1751 3rd edn. (see n. 3) reproduces the engraved folding score in a manner faithful to its original appearance.

7. Terry Castle’s discussion of hermeneutic questions raised across “a number of sign systems” in the novel, for example, makes no mention of the heroine’s musical composition (*Clarissa’s Ciphers: Meaning and Disruption in Richardson’s “Clarissa”* [Ithaca & London: Cornell Univ., 1982], p. 91). Similarly, Jocelyn Harris' brief discussion of the “Ode to Wisdom” in her book *Samuel Richardson* ([London: Cambridge Univ., 1987]), pp. 56–57), as well as Martha Bowden's treatment of Clarissa’s musical playing in “Composing Herself: Music, Solitude and St. Cecilia in *Clarissa*” (forthcoming in *1650–1850: Ideas, Aesthetics, and Inquiries in the Early Modern Era*), remain incomplete as a result of neglecting the novel's original musical score. See also Margaret Anne Doody's discussion of music and dance in *Grandison* (*A Natural Passion: A Study of the Novels of...*
In a subsequent essay, “The Man-made World of Clarissa Harlowe and Robert Lovelace,” Doody glances briefly at music in *Clarissa* and acknowledges the original material appearance of this “fold-out page of music.” However, Doody’s assessment of this page as “a present from Clarissa” does not satisfactorily explore this unusual textual moment (*Samuel Richardson: Passion and Prudence*, ed. Valerie Grosvenor Myer [Totowa, N.J.: Barnes & Noble, 1986], pp. 52–77, at 62–63).

8. Richardson to Elizabeth Carter, 18 Dec. 1747. The 1747–48 correspondence between Carter and Richardson does not appear in Barbauld or (fully) in Carroll; the latter includes only a paragraph from another letter dated 17 Dec. 1748. The complete exchange was, however, reprinted in *The Monthly Magazine* 33 (1812): 533–35. I will quote from this reprinting.


10. The musical score appears in all of Richardson’s original edns. of *Clarissa*: in the 1st edn. (1748) the engraved folding leaf of music is bound to face p. 50 in vol. 2; in the 2nd edn. (1749) it faces p. 48; and, in the 3rd (1751) p. 54. Richardson has the music reengraved for inclusion in the 4th edn. in both octavo (1751) and duodecimo (1759), where it is resized to fit on p. 362 of vol. 1. For a complete collation of the contents of each edn. see William Merritt Sale Jr., *Samuel Richardson: A Bibliographical Record of His Literary Career* (New Haven: Yale Univ., 1936), pp. 45–61.


12. Literary criticism appears to have been influenced on this point by Richardson’s many biographers. Accounts of the publication history of *Clarissa* highlight Richardson’s appropriation of Carter’s ode without remarking upon the uncommon decision to set it to music (see Alan Dugald McKillop, *Samuel Richardson: Printer and Novelist* [Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina, 1936], p. 141; T. C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, *Samuel Richardson: A Biography* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1971], pp. 214–16; and Sale, *Bibliographical Record*, p. 52). See also n. 7.


16. Richardson to Carter, 18 Dec. 1747. Unfortunately, it is not known whom Richardson employed for the musical setting of the ode.

17. The fact that the genre of the novel itself remained in flux during the production of *Clarissa* also complicates claims about the “unconventionality” of this musical illustration in Richardson’s fiction.
18. John Alcock, *Six suites of easy lessons for the harpsicord or spinet, with a trumpet piece* (London: Printed for the author and sold by him in Plymouth: Mr. Walsh in Catherine Street in the Strand: Mr. Pierce in Crosby Square and at all the musick shops, 1741); William Babell, *Suits [sic] of the most celebrated lessons collected and fitted to the harpsicord or spinet* (London: I. Walsh...& I. Hare, 1717); Jean Philippe Rameau, *A collection of lessons for the harpsicord. Opera seconda* (London: Printed for I. Walsh, 1760); Jean Joseph Cassanea de Mondonville, *Six sonatas or lessons for the harpsicord which may be accompanied with a violin or German flute...* (London: Printed for I. Walsh, 1753; and [Anon.], *Shorts airs and lessons for the harpsicord or spinet by several hands* (London, [17—]). Dates in lower margins of the anonymous collection range between 1735 and 1741.

19. In a sense, the musical page offers the reader a companion piece to Clarissa’s 10th Mad Paper, another uncommonly printed page in the novel. While Richardson graphically presents his heroine at her most ‘composed’ in the musical score, he later conveys her post-rape fragmentation and psychological decomposition in the layout of the ‘mad’ page.

20. Refs. to the common method of sale for individual musical pieces can be found in advertisements or publication notes in music of the period. The song “The Storm: or the Dangers of the Sea. Sung by Mr. Dodd,” for example, bears the subscript “London: Printed and Sold by R. Falkener, N° 45 Salisbury-Court, Fleetstreet. Where may be had a choice collection of the most celebrated Songs, Catches, & c. at a PENNY a-page.” Similarly the advertisement at the front of *The Musical Miscellany; Being a Collection of CHOICE SONGS, Set to the VIOLIN and FLUTE, By the most Eminent MASTERS* (London: Printed by and for John Watts, 1729–31) confirms the standard format of printed music in loose half sheets: “A Collection of Choice Songs are here bound up together, the only Method of preserving them; and at so easy a Rate, that they will not cost the Purchasers half the Money they wou’d come to in loose Half Sheets.”


22. Of the better-known mid-18th-century periodicals, *The Gentleman’s Magazine* contains perhaps the most numerous examples of letter-press music. For a typical collection of letter-press music, see *An Antidote Against Melancholy. Being a Collection of Fourscore Merry Songs, Wherein those of the same SUBJECT and KEY are placed in agreeable succession in Relation to the Different Measures of Time, After the Manner of SUITS OF LESSONS* (London: Printed for Daniel Brown, 1749). It is interesting to note that this particular collection of printed “merry songs” also conspicuously models itself, like Clarissa’s music, after the more elevated genre of “suits of lessons.”

23. “It was Mr. Western’s Custom every Afternoon, as soon as he was drunk, to hear his Daughter play on the Harpsichord...He never relished any Music but what was light and airy; and indeed his most favourite Tunes, were *Old Sir Simon the King, St. George he was for England, Bobbing Joan, and some others*” (*Tom Jones*, intro. Martin C. Battestin, text ed. Fredson Bowers [Wesleyan Univ., 1975], bk. IV, chap. v, p. 169). Western’s three favorite Restoration tunes are a predictable ensemble of patriotic ditty and bawdy ballad. For a discussion of these songs, see W. Chappell, *Old English Popular Music*, ed. H. Ellis Woolridge (1893), i.280–82, 312; ii.102–04. The
collection *An Antidote Against Melancholy* mentioned above, for example, contains a similar miscellany of songs fit for an afternoon of Fieldingsque revelry: “Here lies honest Stephen, with Mary his Bride,” “Prithee Cloe, give o’er,” and “The mighty State of Cuckoldom by Matrimony thrives.”

24. This particular genre of all-verbal lyric books seems to bear evocatively georgic titles: *The Hive. A Collection of the Most Celebrated SONGS* (London: Printed for J. Walthoe junr., 1724); *The Robin. A Collection of Six Hundred and Eighty of the most Celebrated English and Scotch SONGS: none of which are contain’d in the other Collections of the same size call’d the Linnet and Thrush...* (London: Printed for C. Hitch & I. Osborn, 1749).

25. I am grateful to Larry Zbikowski (University of Chicago) and Tom McGeary (University of Illinois, Champaign) who generously aided me in identifying these musical characteristics.

26. Richardson’s use of music to distinguish between different kinds of novel readers parallels Henry Fielding’s use of classical allusions and quotations in *Tom Jones*. Just as Fielding encouraged a cultural literacy requirement for readers of the “new species” of writing, the use of musical notation in *Clarissa* suggests that Richardson also imagined the ideal novel reader to have a specific, though distinct, level of cultural sophistication.

27. Roger Lonsdale in his biography of Charles Burney, the 18th-century musical historiographer who was (for a time) a music teacher in provincial King’s Lynn during the early 1750s, consistently describes Burney’s work explicitly in terms of gender and class: “his daily round of teaching the daughters of the aristocracy and the wealthy middle classes” (*Dr. Charles Burney: A Literary Biography* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1965], p. 55). For a more recent discussion of gender, class, and musical education in 18th-century England, see Leppert’s *Music and Image*.

28. Jocelyn Harris characterizes the maiden community depicted in Carter’s “Ode to Wisdom” as akin to “Mary Astell’s idea of a Protestant Nunnery [which] Richardson praised in *Grandison* (III.9)...” (p. 56).

29. Leppert argues that music (particularly the musical education of girls) in 18th-century society remained “an essential component in maintaining the status quo to gender hierarchy” (p. 40). While music might, Leppert acknowledges, create a “compensatory space for women,” society valued it as a harmless pastime, an activity “viewed as non-developmental and expressive of stationary time” (pp. 40 & 29). Richardson, I believe, argues in *Clarissa* that music can, in addition to dispelling boredom, serve a powerful, communal function in women’s lives.

30. A few pages later, while Clarissa pleads with her Aunt Hervey, Bella again flaunts her lack of interest, as opposed to her friendship, by engaging in musical behavior: “Bella all the while humming a tune, and opening this book and that, without meaning; but saying nothing” (1:310).

31. This particular letter of Anna’s even opens with a musical metaphor that similarly aligns musical performance with female independence and stubborn self-sufficiency: “You plead generously for Mr. Hickman. Perhaps, with regard to him, I may have done, as I have often done in singing—Begun a note or key too high; and yet, rather than begin again, proceed, tho’ I strain my voice, or spoil my tune” (3:169).

33. It seems that Jane Austen, a devotee of Richardson, found cause to echo this same sentiment in *Emma*. In Austen’s novel, it is Mrs. Elton who laments the lack of a female community of amateur musicians: “[F]or married women, you know—there is a sad story against them, in general. They are but too apt to give up music” (*Emma*, 1st edn., 3 vols. [London: Printed for John Murray, 1816], 2:271).

Richardson again makes a woman’s music the barometer of domestic felicity in *Grandison* where the crisis of the marital difficulties between Lady and Lord G is marked by Lord G’s destruction of his wife’s harpsichord (6th edn., 5:51). And in *Pamela* Richardson had already listed the playing of music among the most desirable employments of a wife (1st edn., 2:63).

34. For a broader contextualization of music’s complex role in matrimony during the 18th-century, see the chap. entitled “Music in Domestic Space: Domination, Compensation, and the Family” in Leppert’s *Music and Image* (pp. 176–200).

35. Lady Bradshaigh’s copy of *Clarissa* is now part of the Taylor Collection at the Princeton Univ. Library. Heavily annotated by both Lady Bradshaigh and Richardson himself, this unique copy of the 1st edn. text offers a still-unexplored case study in both contemporary reaction to *Clarissa* and Richardson’s relationship with his readers. I quote from my unpublished transcription of these annotations.

36. Apparently still unsatisfied with the “subtlety” of the songbird analogy, Richardson also adds Lovelace’s observations on the grotesque practice of using “burning knitting-needles to put out the eyes of the poor feather’d songster” (4:16).

37. Margaret Anne Doody glosses the “fold-out page” as precisely such an invitation: “The reader can remove it for the domestic music library. ‘A present from Clarissa’ this might be called, a piece of her making offered as a gift” (“The Man-made World,” p. 63).

38. An admirable exception to this general neglect is Janet E. Aikins’ essay “Richardson’s ‘speaking pictures’” (in *Samuel Richardson: Tercentenary Essays*, ed. Margaret Anne Doody & Peter Sabor [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ., 1989], pp. 146–66). Aikins’ discussion of a “powerful visual aesthetic” in *Pamela* pays close attention to the engravings by Hayman and Gravelot that Richardson commissioned for the 6th edn. (1742) of this novel. Similarly, the work of Murray L. Brown is directing attention to Richardson’s visual acumen as it applies to his use of verbal iconography and imagery (“Learning to Read Richardson: *Pamela*, ‘speaking pictures,’ and the Visual Hermeneutic,” *Studies in the Novel* 25 [Summer 1993]: 129–51).

39. The 1940 Odyssey edn. of *Tristram Shandy*, ed. James A. Work, devotes a separate page in the central text of vol. 1 to the musical text and score of “Lilliburlero” (p. 70). Readers of this edn. might have assumed that there was a ‘musical page’ in Sterne’s original work. In fact, there is no such musical score in the original printings of Sterne’s novel. The fact that the music in the
Odyssey edn. does not appear inconsistent with the rest of Sterne’s visually experimental text supports my claim that Richardson’s musical page resembles Sterne’s self-conscious application of graphic design.